A Logical Reconsideration of the Aquinus Proofs for the Existence of God[1]

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The purpose of this paper

The thesis of this paper is to clarify the logical vulnerability of the proofs.

The purpose and context of the proofs

In his proofs for the existence of God, Aquinas intends to explain the foundations of Christian doctrine. He also tries to demonstrate that the logic of Aristotle could be supportive of Christian doctrine. Aquinas wants to show

> . . . the Christian faith rests on a rational foundation and and that the principles of philosophy do not necessarily lead to a view of the world which excludes Christianity either implicitly or explicitly.[2]

Aquinas writes his *Summa Theologica* to the Christian faithful but also to a philosophically sophisticated audience that appreciates the strict use of reason in the context of faith.

It is debatable whether the Aquinas proofs qualify as adequate philosophical theology today. His arguments are very brief. They are largely based on

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[1] A good annotated bibliography on proofs for the existence of God is found in *A Modern Introduction to Philosophy: Readings From Classical and Contemporary Sources*, ed. by Paul Edwards and Arthur Pap (New York: The Free Press 1968), pp. 490-502.
[2] F.C. Copleston, *Aquinas* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1982), pp. 11-12.